

356 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

hinder. I asked him whether it was not
because hee had a
mind to command the army against France ;
hee said
nothing, but did not deny it.¹ *

Here is plainly shown what William meant
when he spoke
about leaving the government to the Queen.
The words
referred, not to an intended abdication, but to
a temporary
absence from England for military purposes.

William's hope that Ireland would be
conquered in one
campaign was speedily destroyed. Schomberg
landed on
August 13, and encamped at Dundalk about a
month later.
On September 21 James and the Irish offered
battle, but
Schomberg would not fight. Throughout the
winter of
1689-1690 the English army remained
stationary in the
camp at Dundalk, suffering great hardships
and great
losses, which were mainly due to the badness
of the military
organisation.

William had come to the conclusion that he
himself was
the person ' most proper for the service ', and
would there-
fore undertake the subjugation of Ireland. On
December 3,
Hoffman, the Austrian agent, wrote to Vienna :
' At the
conclusion of this letter I was assured by a
good hand, that
the King had resolved to go in person to
Ireland in Feb-
ruary, and to prosecute the war there through
his presence,
which the situation requires/ He went on to
say that, since
it was an open unfortified country, William
hoped to bring

the war to an end in a single battle.² A month later the secret was out. In Luttrell's Brief Historical Relation, which is a summary of the information given in the newspapers and newsletters of the day, it is said, under January 8 : ' The King has declared his final resolutions to goe to Ireland/ ³

¹ Ibid. pp. 228, 222.

³ Klopp, v. 64-5, 339.

* Luttrell, ii. 3.